

Mayor Bloomberg and Speaker Quinn Announce Start of Rockaway Ferry Service on May 12, Restored Service to Williamsburg and Expanded East River Routes

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New York City - Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn joined other elected officials today to announce that key parts of the plan developed by the Bloomberg Administration and the Speaker to bring ferry service to all five boroughs will begin May 12, when a new City Council-subsidized route from Far Rockaway to Lower Manhattan starts service. The route, which will run from Riis Landing in Far Rockaway to the Brooklyn Army Terminal to Pier 11 on South Street will connect commuters in Brooklyn and Southern Queens with Lower Manhattan. Additional East River ferry service from Pier 11 and 34th Street to Long Island City and South Williamsburg will be re-launched by a private operator in July, and expanded East River ferry service is expected to begin in two years. The City will also be analyzing additional launch locations across the five boroughs as it looks to expand and encourage the use of this convenient, environmentally sustainable transit mode to places like West 125th Street, Riverdale, Coney Island and Camp St. Edward on Staten Island, among other locations. At the announcement at the Brooklyn Army Terminal, the Mayor and Speaker were joined by DOT Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan, Economic Development Corporation President Seth Pinsky, United States Representatives Carolyn Maloney and Jerrold Nadler, and New York City Council Member Sarah Gonzalez.

"Ferries are fast, affordable, and environmentally-friendly. As our waterfront becomes even more dynamic — with new housing and open space in communities like Greenpoint, Williamsburg, and Hunters Point — ferries are going to become an even bigger part of our city's transportation network," said Mayor Bloomberg. "That vision of a revitalized waterfront is an important element of PlaNYC, and over the past year we've worked closely with Speaker Quinn and the Council to make it a reality."

"I was proud in February to announce an ambitious initiative to make five borough ferry service a reality in New York City," said Speaker Christine C. Quinn. "I am even prouder today that less than three months later, the first pieces of this plan are in place. I thank Mayor Bloomberg and my Council colleagues for their incredible support on this project. Ferries offer New Yorkers an affordable, convenient and environmentally responsible way of getting from point A to point B. By making them a key part of our city's transportation infrastructure, we are helping to ensure that New York City remains a shining example of urban sustainability for cities all over the world."

CITY COMMITMENT TO THE ROCKAWAYS:

The two-year pilot Rockaway service will be funded using \$1.1 million allocated by Queens Councilman Joseph P. Addabbo. The Rockaway service will be run by New York Water Taxi and will operate to and from Riis Landing, on National Park Service property, and stop at the Brooklyn Army Terminal en route to Pier 11 in Lower Manhattan. As part of this first phase of the plan, New York Water Taxi will also restore service in July to Long Island City and to South Williamsburg via a new \$1.25 million City-funded launch facility being built at Schaefer Landing, connecting to Pier 11 and 34th Street.

"Expanding ferry service is a tremendous step toward improving mobility and greening up our City's transit network, and we are making sure that this change doesn't end at the ferry landing," said Commissioner Sadik-Khan. "We will also be building out our docking facility at 34th Street, where we will inaugurate faster, Select Bus Service with NYC Transit to get commuters quickly from the dock to their desks."

While previous attempts to connect the boroughs with ferry service have had mixed results, plans for the new service differ in important ways. The Council, DOT and EDC are currently working with the MTA to connect ferry landings with bus service, providing commuters an important layer of convenience traveling to and from their destinations. In addition, the funding secured by Councilman Addabbo will cap the cost of service to Far Rockaway at \$6 a trip. The result will be ferry service that offers an unprecedented degree of convenience and affordability.

"We are pleased that these environmentally-friendly and sustainable initiatives are moving forward," said EDC President Seth W. Pinsky. "Recognizing the benefits ferry service will bring to commercial and residential development projects in waterfront areas, EDC is working with members of the Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY) to explore ways for impacted developers to support the East River ferry service. We applaud REBNY's support of improved waterborne transportation."

EXPANDED EAST RIVER SERVICE:

The second phase of the plan will further expand East River service by adding new stops at North Williamsburg and Greenpoint in Brooklyn. Studies conducted by EDC and DOT have concluded that this arrangement on the East River will provide the most useful service for commuters in Manhattan, Queens and Brooklyn. This phase of the plan will also include the construction of a new landing at Roosevelt Island that will be used by a private operator. EDC has budgeted funds to begin the design phase of this service, and there is \$4.4 million in federal transportation funds secured by Congress members Jerrold Nadler and Carolyn Maloney, matched with \$1.1 million split from the Bloomberg Administration and the City Council. The federal funds will be used to construct the ferry landings at Greenpoint and North Williamsburg as well as the dock at Roosevelt Island

"For a city of islands, ferries are a natural fit. I'm delighted that federal funds will help bring convenient and downright scenic ferry service to commuters in some of New York's fastest-growing communities," said Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney. "This investment will also help build a new ferry dock on Roosevelt Island, giving residents there much-needed access to alternative transportation. I was proud to work with Mayor Bloomberg, Speaker Quinn, Congressman Nadler, and Councilwoman Jessica Lappin to secure these crucial upgrades to our transportation network."

"I am excited to see the City move forward with its ambitious plan to greatly expand ferry service for thousands of New Yorkers to commute into Manhattan," said Congressman Jerrold Nadler. "I am pleased that I was able to secure \$4.4 million in Federal funds for this citywide effort and I commend Mayor Bloomberg for providing residents with poor transportation access the option to take to our underutilized waterways."

FIVE BOROUGH PLAN:

In addition, the City Council will provide approximately \$500,000 to fund an in-depth study to be conducted by City agencies and outside consultants of potential sites in all five boroughs capable of supporting new ferry service, including Riverdale, Orchard Beach, Ferry Point, Soundview and Hunts Point in the Bronx; LaGuardia Airport and Astoria in Queens; Bay Ridge, and Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn; and 125th Street, East 20th Street, East 75th Street and East 90th Street in Manhattan. Analysis is already underway for service to Camp St. Edward on Staten Island and EDC is issuing a Request for Proposals for a consultant to study Coney Island ferry service. The study will include an analysis of the ferry market within the five boroughs and will be used to plan new routes that will take pressure off of crowded transportation routes and connect areas of the City currently underserved by mass-transit with new transportation options. The City is also participating in a Port Authority study that will examine the commuter ferry network from a regional perspective. The Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance, a region-wide coalition of 329 organizations and community groups, praised the leadership of the Mayor, the Speaker, the Council and the NY Congressional delegation.

"By taking this first step in creating a citywide ferry system," said Roland Lewis, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance, "the Mayor is expanding his effort to open up our waterfront to all New Yorkers. This new blue highway can be efficient and green transit for many thousands of New Yorkers. And by setting the water transit fare equal to an express bus fare, this truly will make ferries an attractive option for many people, and at the same time help relieve stress on our already crowded transit systems and congested roads."

Many of the above initiatives also make use of funding from the Federal Transit Administration, Federal Highway Administration, New York State Department of Transportation, and the Port Authority.